

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PEKING 02349 010912Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 OMB-01 ACDA-12 HA-05 IO-13 TRSE-00 /109 W
-----030544 010916Z /17

P R 010739Z AUG 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1539
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 2349

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT CH MPOL

SUBJ: THE PLA'S 51ST ANNIVERSARY: LEADERSHIP AND MEDIA ATMOSPHERICS

REF: 1977 PEKING 1588

1. SUMMARY. CCP VICE CHAIRMAN AND PLA CHIEF OF STAFF
TENG HSIAO-PING SPOKE BRIEFLY AT THE JULY 31 LEADERSHIP
GATHERING TO MARK THE PLA'S 51ST ANNIVERSARY ON AUGUST 1.
TENG CALLED UPON THE PLA TO IMPLEMENT THE SPIRIT OF THE
JAY/JUNE ALL-ARMY POLITICAL WORK CONFERENCE AND UNDER-
SCORED THE IMPORTANCE OF MILITARY MODERNIZATION --
MAJOR THEMES IN THE MEDIA ARTICLES COMMEMORATING THE
EVENT. TENG MADE THE OBLIGATORY STATEMENT "WE WILL
CERTAINLY LIBERATE TAIWAN" BUT DID NOT FOLLOW
UEH CHIEN-YING'S EXAMPLE AT LAST YEAR'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION AND AMPLIFY ON THIS THEME. MEDIA ARTICLES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PEKING 02349 010912Z

ASSOCIATED WITH THE EVENT OFFERED FEW SURPRISES,
STRESSING THE NEED TO ACHIEVE PLA MODERNIZATION,
REINFORCE POLITICAL CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY, AND
"SEEK THUTH FROM FACTS" IN APPLYING MILITARY THEORY
TO NEW HISTORICAL CONDITIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PRC LEADERSHIP COMMEMORATED THE 51ST ANNI-

VERSARY OF THE AUGUST 1, 1927 FOUNDING OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (PLA WITH A TRADITIONAL JULY 31 BANQUET/RECEPTION. ATTENDING WERE CCP CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG, VICE CHAIRMEN YEH CHIEN-YING, TENG HSIAO-PING, LI HSIEN-NIEN, WANG TUNG-SHING AND AN ASSORTMENT OF OTHER PARTY, STATE AND MILITARY LEADERS. MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE HSU HSIANG-CHIEN DID NOT ATTEND BUT WAS REPORTED TO HAVE RECEIVED THE VISITING CAMBODIAN MILITARY DELEGATION "IN HOSPITAL" ON JULY 31. REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDERS HSU SHIH-YU AND LI TEH-SHING WERE ABSENT AND WERE PRESUMABLY ATTENDING MEETINGS IN THEIR BAILIWICKS. CCP VICE CHAIRMAN AND PLA CHIEF OF STAFF TENG HSIAO-PING GAVE A SHORT SPEECH AT THE MEETING, EMPHASIZING THE NEED TO CARRY OUT MILITARY MODERNIZATION AND IMPLEMENT THE SPIRIT OF THE MAY/JUNE ALL-ARMY POLITICAL WORK CONFERENCE ON STRENGTHENING POLITICAL CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY. TENG CALLED UPON THE ARMY TO UNITE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF HUA KUO-FENG BUT DID NOT HOLD UP LIN BIAO AS A SUBJECT FOR CRITICISM (A THEME HE EMPHASIZED IN HIS JUNE 3 SPEECH TO THE ARMY CONFERENCE). TENG REPEATED THE OBLIGATORY STATEMENT "WE WILL CERTAINLY LIBERATE TAIWAN" BUT DID NOT EXPAND ON THIS THEME IN CONTRAST TO CCP VICE CHAIRMAN YEH CHIEN-YING'S STATEMENTS ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE AT LAST YEAR'S CEREMONY (REFTEL).
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PEKING 02349 010912Z

3. MEDIA ARTICLES COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVILIAN CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY, MILITARY MODERNIZATION AND SEEKING "TRUTH FROM FACTS." POLITBURO MEMBER AND MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE HSU HSIANG-CHIEN UNDERSCORED THESE POINTS IN A LONG AUGUST RED FLAG ARTICLE REPRINTED IN THE JULY 31 PEOPLE'S DAILY. ANALYZING THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AND THE CHINESE CONTENTION THAT WAR IS INEVITABLE, HSU SAID THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY MUST MAKE RENEWED EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE MILITARY MODERNIZATION. HE ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE IN "SEEKING TRUTH FROM FACTS" OF INTEGRATING MAO'S MILITARY TEACHINGS WITH NEW HISTORICAL CONDITIONS. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON HSU'S ARTICLE REPORTED SEPTEL.

4. THE AUGUST 1944 REPORT ON POLITICAL WORK IN THE MILITARY (WRITTEN JOINTLY BY MAO AND CHOU) IS BEING HELD UP AS THE KEY DOCUMENT TO BE STUDIED BY THE PLA IN CONNECTION WITH THIS YEAR'S PLA ANNIVERSARY. APPEARING ORIGINALLY IN THE AUGUST ISSUE OF RED FLAG AND REPRINTED IN THE AUGUST 1 PEOPLE'S DAILY,

KUANG MING DAILY AND THE LIBERATION ARMY DAILY, THE REPORT HAS ALSO BEEN GIVEN HEAVY PLAY BY PEKING RADIO. IN A NOTE ACCOMPANYING THE ARTICLE (HEARD OVER PEKING RADIO), THE EDITORS OF RED FLAG STRESS THAT POLITICAL WORK IN THE MILITARY AND "SEEKING TRUTH FROM FACTS" ARE THE KEY POINTS IN THE DOCUMENT. "SEEKING TRUTH FROM FACTS" IS A THEME INCREASINGLY DOMINATING THE MEDIA AND HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH TENG HSIAO-PING'S CONTENTION THAT MARXISM-LENINISM-MAO THOUGHT MUST EVOLVE AS HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CHANGE. RELEASE OF THE 1944 REPORT APPEARS TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO REMIND THE PLA AND THE NATION THAT "SEEKING TRUTH FROM FACTS" HAS A LONG TRADITION DATING BACK TO THE YENAN PERIOD. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT EXPLICITLY STATED, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PEKING 02349 010912Z

"SEEKING TRUTH FROM FACTS" SUGGESTS THAT CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO MORE FLEXIBILITY IN DEVISING MILITARY TACTICS AND RELYING ON MODERN WEAPONS. INDEED, MAO'S CONCEPT OF FIGHTING A "PEOPLE'S WAR" WAS NOT GIVEN THE HIGH LEVEL ATTENTION SEEN IN PAST ANNIVERSARIES.

5. REVOLUTIONARY HEROES CHU TEH AND CHOU EN-LAI WERE ALSO LAUDED IN MEDIA ARTICLES FOR THEIR ROLE IN THE AUGUST 1, 1927. NANCHANG UPRISING WHICH LED TO THE FOUNDING OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY. THE ARTICLE ON CHU TEH, AUTHORED BY HSIAO KO (DIRECTOR OF THE PLA'S MILITARY AND POLITICAL COLLEGE), APPEARED IN THE JULY 28 PEOPLE'S DAILY AND THE ARTICLE ON CHOU EN-LAI APPEARED IN THE JULY 30 ISSUE. BOTH ARTICLES OFFERED NO SURPRISES BUT DID UNDERSCORE THE IMPORTANCE OF BOTH MEN IN FOUNDING THE PLA AND DOWNPLAYED MAO'S ROLE IN THE EVENTS OF 1927. MAO'S ALLEGED ROLE IN FOUNDING THE PLA WAS A VERY CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT DURING THE GANG OF FOUR ERA.

6. HSIAO'S ARTICLE BRIEFLY MENTIONS LIU SHAO-CHI AS ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE THREE "BOURGEOIS HEADQUARTERS" DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, A THEME WHICH WAS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE JULY 28 NCNA ENGLISH SUMMARY OF THE ARTICLE. NCNA'S HIGHLIGHTING OF SUCH CRITICISM OF LIU SUGGESTS THAT LIU'S STATUS REMAINS CONTROVERSIAL AND IS STILL BEING DISCUSSED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE CCP. LIKEWISE, THE JULY 30 ARTICLE ALSO CRITICALLY MENTIONED FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER PENG TEH-HUAL. DESPITE PENG'S PURGE IN 1959, HE PROBABLY STILL REMAINS CONTROVERSIAL BECAUSE OF HIS ADVOCACY OF A MODERN PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 PEKING 02349 010912Z

ARMY -- A GOAL THAT IS NOW RECEIVING INCREASED ATTENTION IN
TODAY'S PLA.
WOODCOCK

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PEKING02349
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780314-0311
Format: TEL
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808112/aaaadqaf.tel
Line Count: 178
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 80236b59-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1577410
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE PLA'S 51ST ANNIVERSARY: LEADERSHIP AND MEDIA ATMOSPHERICS
TAGS: PINT, MPOL, CH, (TENG HSIAO-PING)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/80236b59-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014